

# INSIDER

2007-08  
Annual  
Report

A newsletter for all Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose (BHM) School District residents.

December 2008

Volume 35 Number 4

## Reap from what You Sew

I learned to sew at age nine. My mother would draw simple shapes in pencil on a piece of paper and have us practice following the lines on her sewing machine with an old, dull needle. Once simple shapes were mastered, we progressed to added swirls and turns in the shapes. Now more than 30 years later, I continue to use those skills that I learned so many years ago. Now they are used to patch the holes in my son's jeans, to make doll clothes and Barbie furniture coverings for my daughters, and to create crafts to give as gifts to others. I am grateful to my mother for teaching me this useful lifelong skill.



Pam Miller  
Teaching and  
Learning Director

Technical Education (CTE) program. CTE also includes Ag Education, Business & Computer Technology, and Technology Education. Several excellent opportunities such as the one I described are afforded our students in all four of these departments. Students are introduced and exposed to a wide array of skills and career opportunities. In addition, their technical reading and math skills are enhanced through practical application. A few of the opportunities the students of BHM experience are highlighted here.

### Intro to Technology

Sixth grade student Jonathan Senger was nervous about

entering the middle school with little technology experience. The thought of typing papers and completing projects on the computer in an efficient manner, made Senger worry if he could keep up in middle school. Luckily, in his first quarter of classes, Senger had the newly required 6<sup>th</sup> grade technology course that would ease his fears.

"I can type faster," explains Senger who was all smiles as he tells what he learned in class. "I also learned how to do a Power Point presentation and probably my favorite thing was learning how to use Movie Maker. We used footage from our fieldtrip to Camp Friendship to create our movie project. It was really fun to do!"

The 6<sup>th</sup> grade technology course is designed to provide students with 21<sup>st</sup> century skills that will give them success in life. Each student is given equal experience in technology to use as a springboard for expanding learning. The course also offers Internet safety, "netiquette" (etiquette on the Internet) and website evaluation. It challenges students' critical thinking skills, and the various applications and programs provide opportunities to discover a variety of presentation and communication methods.

Parent Christina Kunze was compelled to email her child's teacher after he took the class. "I wanted to thank you. Ben had a great time in technology

**Reap the Benefits, p. 2**

On a recent visit to Buffalo Community Middle School, I spoke with two young girls learning to sew as a part of their 8<sup>th</sup> grade Family & Consumer Science (FACS) class. As they pressed the top of their flannel pants to create a casing for the elastic waistband, I learned neither of the two girls had any prior experience with sewing. They both seemed to be enjoying the learning experience. I do not know if these young ladies will continue to hone their sewing skills as I did. However, I do believe the exposure to such a skill is a great opportunity for all students.

The Family & Consumer Science (FACS) department is a part of the district's Career &



Buffalo Community Middle School 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher Jenny Wykle helps student Jonathan Senger with his video project in the newly required technology course.

## 2008-09 Test Calendar

There are a variety of tests that are used to evaluate the achievement of students as well as instructional programs in the Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose Schools (BHM). Students are tested in order to determine instructional level, measure basic skills, evaluate student progress towards achieving state academic standards, and to evaluate program effectiveness.

Major statewide assessments completed during 2007-2008 included the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA-II), Graduation Required

Assessment for Diploma (GRAD) and Basic Skills Tests (BST). Limited English Proficient students are also required to be assessed with the Test of Emerging Academic English (TEAE) and the Minnesota SOLOM. BHM also assesses students in math and reading with Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) tests.

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class. He definitely learned a lot and is eager to show me how to use Windows Movie Maker on our computer. He even plans on making it into a 4-H project for the county fair next year!"

### Career and College Prep

How do I apply for a scholarship? What kind of career can I expect with a two-year or four-year degree? How do I write a resume and prepare for an interview?

These questions and many more are answered in the new career and college prep course offered as a part of the Buffalo High School's (BHS) Business Department. Unless someone tells them, many students have no idea where to start or what to do to prepare themselves for a life beyond high school. The new course provides students the opportunity to research a variety of careers and educational avenues. Students have a chance to perform job shadows, mock interviews, and create portfolios that include cover letters, resumes, scholarship letters, financial aid forms, college applications and much more.

BHS senior Blake Brush says the class is very helpful. "It pushes you to look for scholarships and drives you to further your education. I'm glad I took the course. I feel like I learned a lot more in that class and it made things a lot easier. It's more 'real world' stuff that actually affects my life directly."

### Just the FACS

In 2009, Family and Consumer Science (FACS—a.k.a. home economics) will celebrate their 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary teaching students life skills to help them become independent, and family and community contributors. The program has provided opportunities for students to explore possible career opportunities in the field.

A new class at Buffalo High School, creating interior spaces, is something similar to a "designer's challenge" as seen in popular television shows. Students are challenged to design a room for a specific family, complete with samples of floor coverings, paint, fab-

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## Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose School District 2000-09 Testing Schedule

Date	Grade Level	*Test	Subject
Sept 8-30	1-11	MAP	
Oct 9	11	GRAD	Reading (Retakes)
Nov 18	10-12	BST/GRAD	Written Composition (Retakes)
Nov 19	12	BST	Math (Retakes)
Nov 20	12	BST	Reading (Retakes)
Dec 8	11	GRAD	Reading (Retakes)
Feb 3	12	BST	Math (Retakes)
Feb 4	12	BST	Reading (Retakes)
Feb 9	11	GRAD	Reading (Retakes)
March 31	12	BST	Written Composition (Retakes)
April 1	12	BST	Math (Retakes)
April 2	12	BST	Reading (Retakes)
April 10	11	GRAD	Reading (Retakes)
April 14	3-8, 11 10 9	MCA-II MCA-II GRAD	Math Reading Written Composition
April 15	3-8, 11 10	MCA-II MCA-II	Math Reading
April 21	3-8	MCA-II	Reading
April 22	3-8	MCA-II	Reading
April 28	5, 8, 08-09 Bio Students	MCA-II	Science
May 4-22	1-9	MAP	
June 11	11	GRAD	Reading (Retakes)
July 21	10-12	BST/GRAD	Written Composition (Retakes)
July 22	12	BST	Math (Retakes)
July 23	12	BST	Reading (Retakes)

\*BST = Basic Skills Tests

\*MAP = Measures of Academic Progress

\*MCA-II = Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments II

\*GRAD = Graduation Required Assessment for Diploma

Please plan family vacations with these dates in mind. Federal legislation requires 95% of district students to take the MCA's because the results determine if adequate yearly progress is made towards No Child Left Behind.



BHS senior Blake Brush makes his move during a game of Career Odyssey with classmates (clockwise from his left) Matthew Taylor, Katherine Stensing, Zach Smith and Ben Kath. Submitted photo.



## What it Takes to Graduate

All students in Minnesota schools are required to demonstrate basic competencies in reading, math and written composition in order to be eligible for a Minnesota public high school diploma. These assessments provide a “safety net” assuring that all Minnesota students graduate with the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics.

Current 12<sup>th</sup> grade students are required to pass the Basic Skills Tests (BSTs) in mathematics, reading and written composition. In order to pass, students are required to score 75 percent correct on the reading and math tests and a score of 3 or above on the written composition BST. Only students who had not previously passed the reading, math or written composition BST were tested in 2007-08.

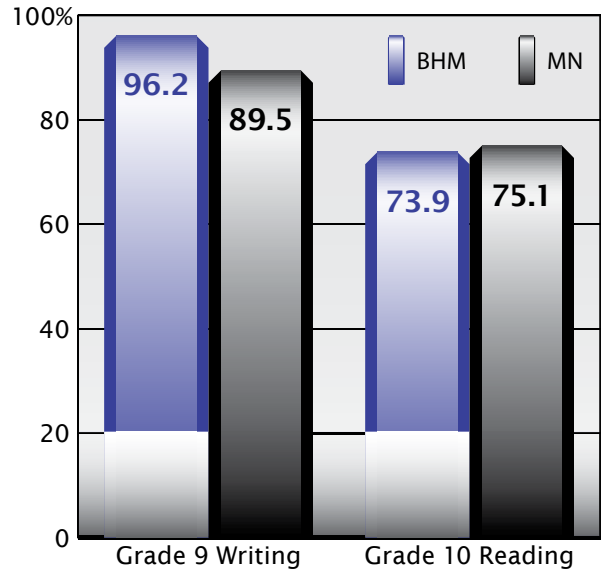
Because of legislation passed in 2004, BSTs are being phased out. Students in 11<sup>th</sup> grade and younger are required to pass the Graduation Required Assessment for Diploma (GRAD) test of written composition administered at grade 9, and either be proficient on the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA-IIs) in mathematics and reading, or attain a scale score of 50 (approximately 75% percent correct) on GRAD tests contained within them.

About 96% of BHM 9<sup>th</sup> grade students passed the GRAD written composition assessment administered last April compared to about 90% of Minnesota students. Almost 74% of BHM students passed the GRAD reading requirement when first administered last April, compared to just over 75% of Minnesota students.

If students do not pass a BST or GRAD test the first time they are administered, there are multiple opportunities to take them again. BSTs are offered in November, February, April and July. GRAD tests are scheduled every-other-month (October, December, February, April and June).

A variety of remedial opportunities are available for students who have not yet passed BSTs or GRAD tests. Staff will contact parents of students who have not yet passed one or more of these tests during the year to discuss remediation options. Remediation may include basic courses at the high school, sum-

### 2007-08 High School Graduation Tests



2007-08 High School Graduation Tests			
	Students Enrolled (June 5, 2008)	Students with all Graduation Tests Completed	Students Passing at Pass Individual Level Under IEP or 504
<b>Grade 9*</b>	500	0*	5
<b>Grade 10*</b>	423	0*	6
<b>Grade 11</b>	420	403	18
<b>Grade 12</b>	409	409	27

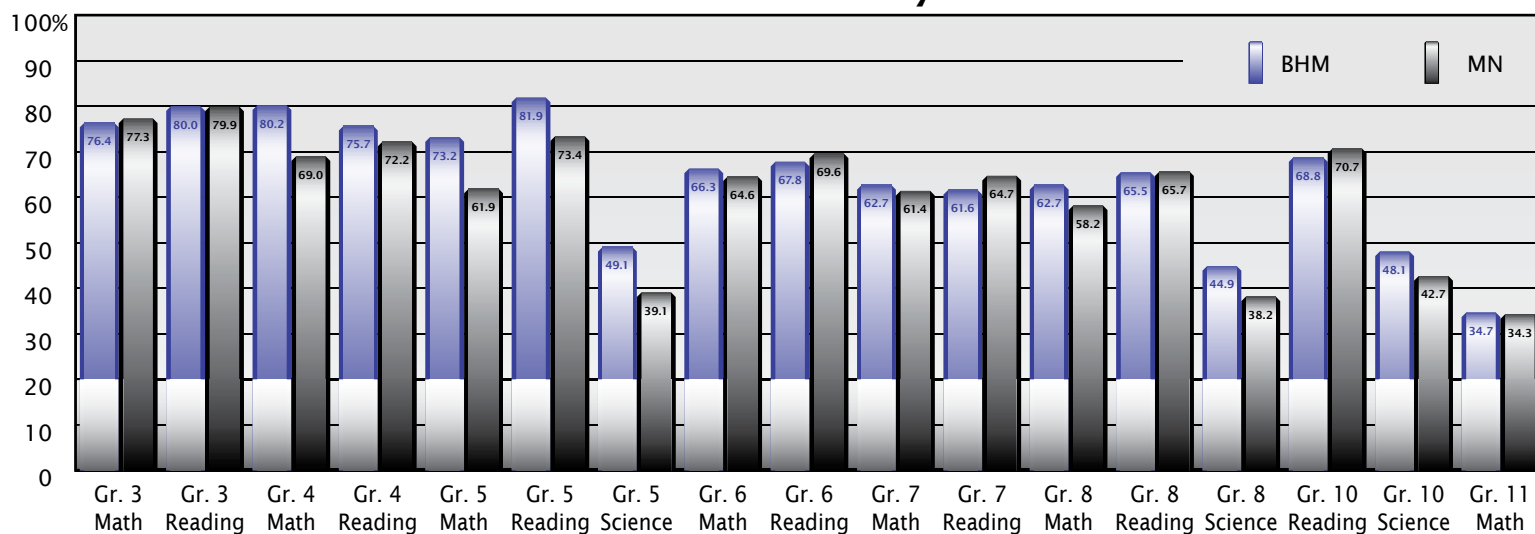
**\*These students have not yet attempted all graduation tests. Reading (Grade 10) and Math (Grade 11) graduation tests are incorporated into MCA-IIs.**

mer school courses, after-school clinics or special education services for eligible students.

The table above shows the number of students enrolled in Grades 9-12, the number who successfully passed BSTs or GRAD tests during 2007-08 and the number still needing to complete graduation requirements.



## 2008 MCA-II Proficiency Levels



## MCA-IIs Add Science

Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA-IIs) were administered in math, reading and science. Reading MCA-IIs are administered in grades 3-8 and 10, math in grades 3-8 and 11, and science in grades 5, 8 and high school biology students. The purpose of these assessments is to evaluate student progress towards achieving state academic standards and determine adequate yearly progress as mandated by Minnesota's plan for No Child Left Behind legislation.

Results from the 2008 MCA-IIs show the percentage of BHM students scoring at the "meets" or "exceeds" standards up slightly in both reading and math when compared to 2007. In reading, 71.5% of BHM students were judged proficient compared to 70.5% of Minnesota students. In math, over 65% of BHM students scored at proficient levels in math compared to 62% for the state.

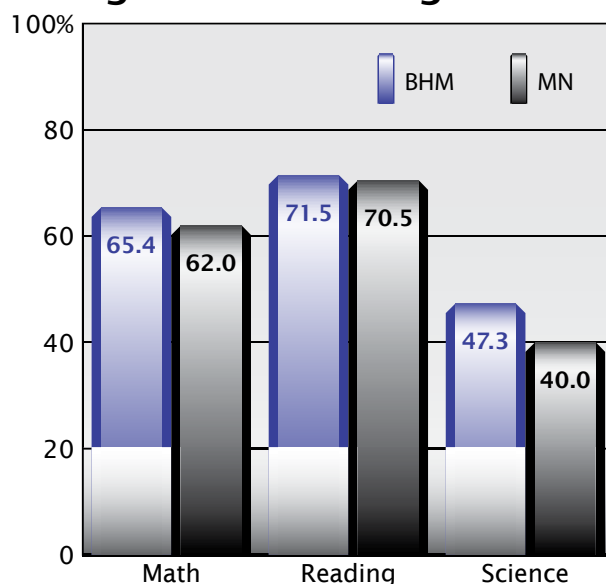
Reading proficiency in BHM increased slightly at four of seven grades when compared to 2007. BHM, however, had fewer students scoring at the proficient level than MN at four of seven

grades with only students in grades 3-5 exceeding Minnesota averages. In math, over 65% of BHM students were proficient in 2008 compared to 62% of Minnesota students. The percentage of BHM students achieving proficiency in math was higher than Minnesota at six of seven grades.

The MCA-II science assessment was administered for the first time during May 2008. All students in grades 5 and 8, as well as all high school students who completed biology during the 2007-08 school year (mostly 10<sup>th</sup> grade students) were tested. As a district, 47% of BHM students were proficient in science compared to 40% of Minnesota students. BHM students outperformed their statewide counterparts at all three grade levels assessed. While the MCA-II science test is mandatory for NCLB, it is not used to determine a district's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).

**Adequate Yearly Progress** MCA-IIs are used by Minnesota to measure AYP of all students and eight other subgroups in the district. All students and subgroups are

## 2008 Percent of Students "Meeting" or "Exceeding Standards"



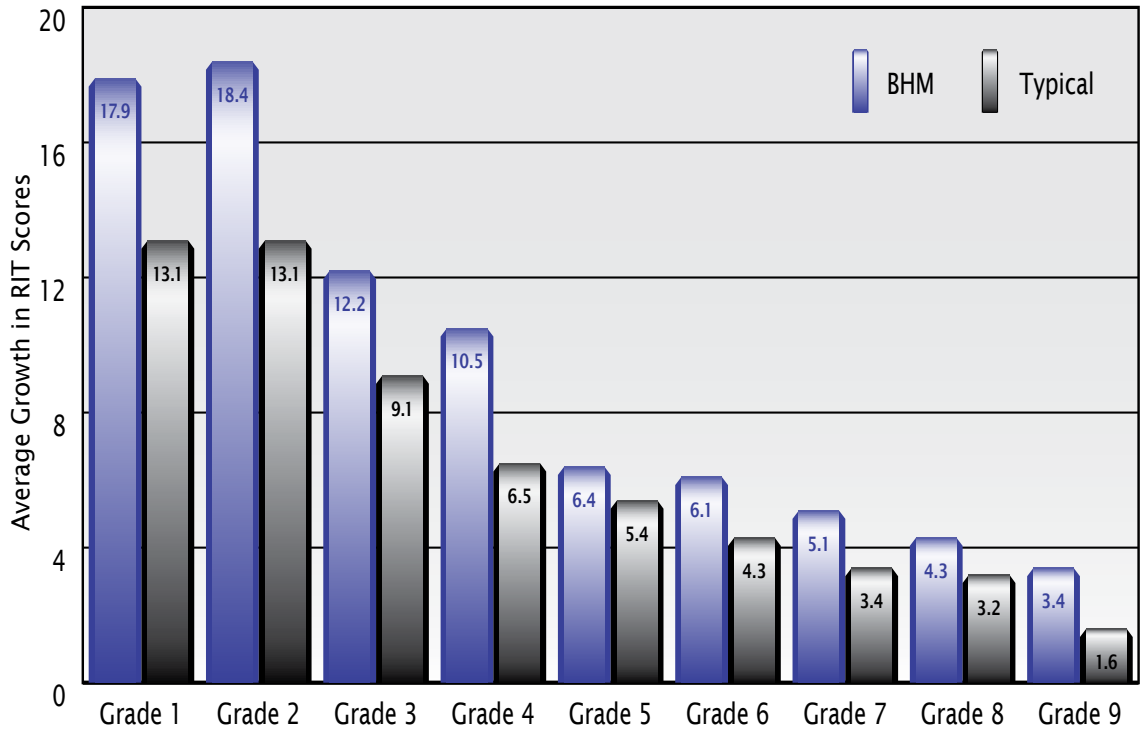
expected to make predetermined progress towards 100% proficiency by 2014. District students made AYP in 32 of 36 subgroups during 2007-08. However, Limited English Proficient (LEP), special education and black students did not make AYP in math and special education students also did not make AYP in reading. Because this is the fourth year in a row that a subgroup did not make AYP in math, the district is cited as "needing improvement." As a consequence, a district

team of parents and staff developed a district improvement plan. It addresses academic areas and populations for which needs are identified and 10% of Title I funds are set aside to support this effort until AYP requirements have been met for two consecutive years. The plan was reviewed by the BHM School Board and submitted to the Minnesota Department of Education. The plan included professional development for teachers to improve strategies for teaching struggling learners.

## MAP of Progress

Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) tests are administered in grades 1-11. Information from these tests is used to identify each student's individual instructional level in reading and math. Both reading and math are assessed during the fall and spring in grades 1-9. Reading is also assessed in grade 10 and math in grade 11 in the fall. Teachers are provided with detailed information on what reading and math skills students are ready to learn. Fall test scores are used to establish a target growth goal and the spring test determines if the goal has been achieved. BHM students have consistently demonstrated more growth than what is typical in the national sample.

### 2007-08 Growth in MAP Reading Scores

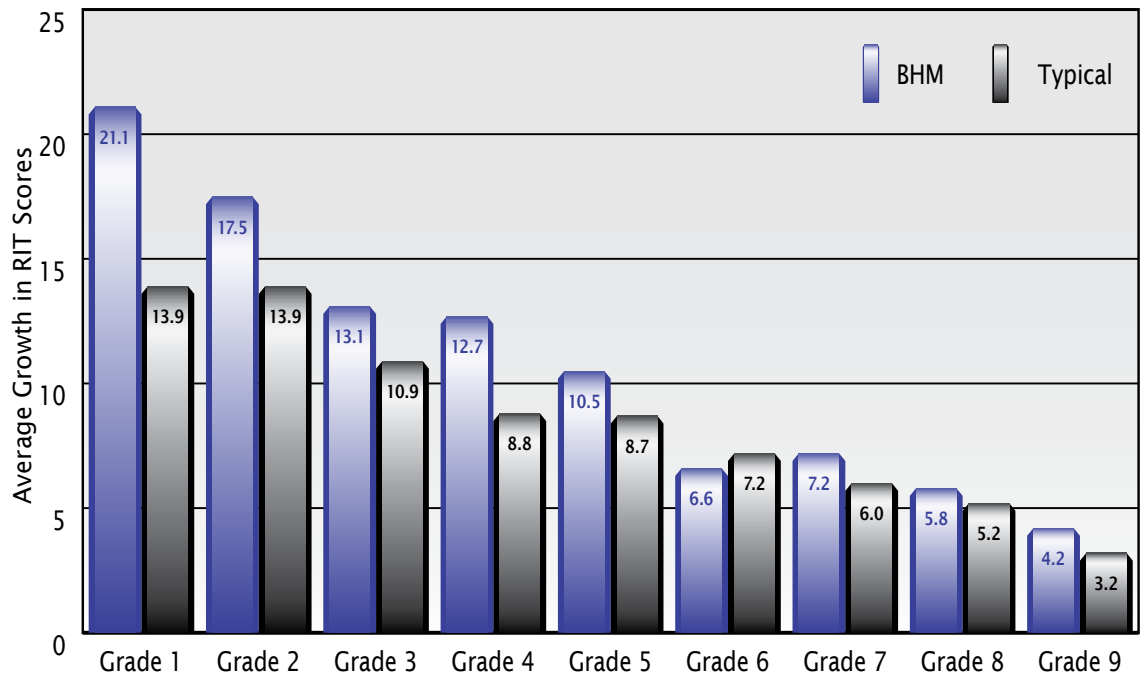


## 2008-09 Board Goals for Student Success

The Buffalo-Hanover-Monrose School Board has adopted the following goals for student achievement in the district for the 2008-09 school year:

1. Reduce the incidents of bullying to provide a safe, comfortable environment for everyone in our schools.
2. Demonstrate a 5.76% annual increase in the overall percentage of students meeting proficiency standards on the MCA-II's in math, and demonstrate a 4.75% annual increase in the overall percentage of students meeting proficiency standards on the MCA-II's in reading.
3. Demonstrate a 5% increase in the overall percentage of students meeting annual MAP growth targets within two years.

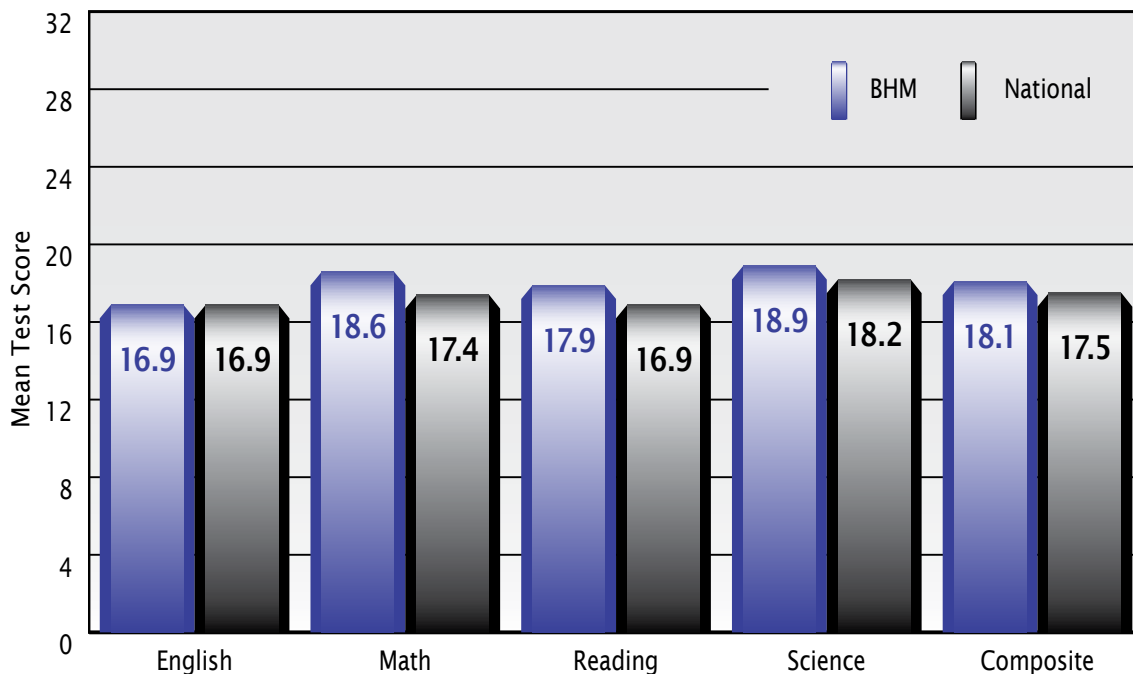
### 2007-08 Growth in MAP Math Scores



## PLAN to ACT for the Future

The PLAN test is given to all BHM students in the fall of grade 10. The PLAN, administered by the American College Testing organization, is a predictor of success on the ACT college entrance exam and focuses on both career preparation and improving academic achievement. PLAN test results are reported by a scale score ranging from 1 to 32. The chart to the right shows how the score performance of BHM 10<sup>th</sup> grade students compares with that of 10<sup>th</sup> grade students nationwide. When comparing means, differences of 0.5 or greater are likely to be statistically significant. With the exception of English, BHM students scored significantly higher than their national peers.

### 2007 PLAN Test Student Performance



### Grade 11-12 ACT Test

Graduating Class	Total Tested	BHM	Minnesota	Nation
2005	228	22.1	22.3	20.9
2006	229	22.2	22.3	21.1
2007	236	22.5	22.5	21.5
2008	252	22.1	22.6	21.1

The American College Test (ACT) is taken voluntarily by students in their junior or senior years as an entrance exam for post-secondary schools. The BHM average results are listed below in comparison to national norms. The highest possible score on the ACT Test is 36. Minnesota ranked tenth in the nation on this test during 2007-08.

## 2008-09 Community Teaching & Learning Council

### District Staff Representatives

Pam Miller ..... Director of Teaching & Learning  
 Shane Thielke ..... Parkside Elementary Principal  
 Mark Mischke ..... Buffalo High School Principal  
 Camryn Scherber .. Early Childhood Special Education Teacher  
 Jennifer Fonkert ..... Elementary Teacher  
 Cindi Tagg ..... Elementary Teacher  
 Jack Brady ..... Buffalo Community Middle School Teacher  
 Ryan Rehnstrand ... Buffalo Community Middle School Teacher  
 Shana Bregenzer ..... Buffalo High School Teacher  
 Ed Cox ..... Buffalo High School Teacher

### School Board Representatives

Melissa Brings ..... Director  
 Sue Lee ..... Clerk

### Parent and Community Representatives

Joan Danielson ..... Lynn Hill ..... Billy Soden  
 Kim Gleason ..... Anastacia Martin ..... Scott Timmerman  
 Jud Goerss ..... Ann Mock

If you are interested in serving on this council, contact Teaching and Learning Director Pam Miller at 763-682-8777 or at [pmiller@buffalo.k12.mn.us](mailto:pmiller@buffalo.k12.mn.us).



# BHM Making a Difference

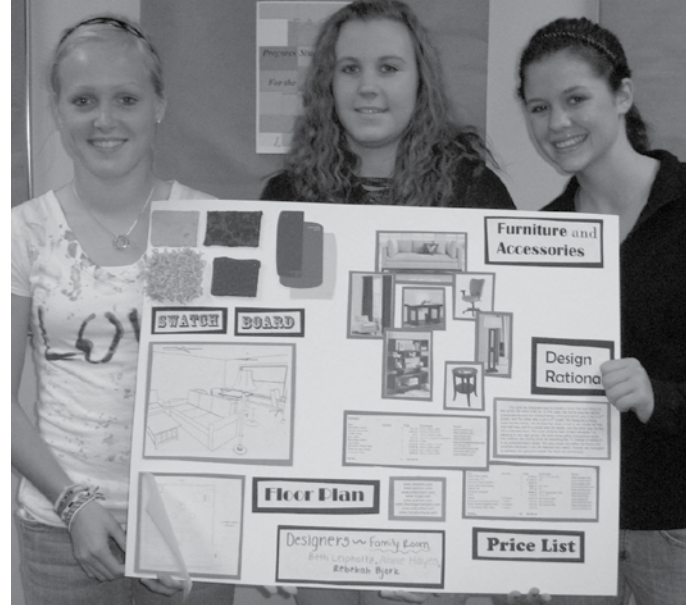
## Reap the Benefits, p. 2

rics for upholstery and window treatments, and a floor plan showing placement of furniture. Students are introduced to Computer Aided Design (CAD) technology as they work to design floor plans and room perspectives.

Two sections of the class are offered for students in grades 10-12 the first two quarters of the year and will count as a fine arts credit towards graduation. The class is already very popular; an average of 58 students have enrolled in the class per quarter.

FACS instructor Judy Titcomb can't explain exactly why the class is so successful, other than perhaps because it is new. "This is a different kind of art in which students can take an interest. I think television programs on HGTV and TLC have also helped generate some interest in interior design. The possibilities for a career in designing interior spaces is really endless when you consider all of the commercial and residential spaces."

Rebekah Bjork, Anne Hayes and Beth Leipholtz proudly pose with their design board they created for their BHS Creating Interior Spaces class. *Submitted photo.*



## BHM is "Proud Of" *Those listed below were submitted by district staff and recognized by the School Board for their special contributions and accomplishments.*



Kathleen Tierney, Jonah Schmitz and Madison Reynolds, students at Discovery Elementary who were selected to sing in the Minnesota Elementary Honor Choir at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota.



Cindy Kotz, fourth grade teacher at Parkside Elementary, who was awarded the Excellent Educator Award by KSTP Channel 5 Eyewitness News.



Karen Rutz, second grade teacher at Montrose Elementary, who was selected as the Buffalo WalMart Store Teacher of the Year.



2007-08 Girls Golf Team who received an All-State Academic Award. The team had an overall grade point average of 3.9. Pictured left to right with coach Riti Sanderson: *Front*—Sophie Jundt, KC Kane, Brittany Freund, Danielle Freund and Megan Davis; *Back*—Sarah Frost, Lindsay Jacobs, Morgan Broten, Abby Bollum and Annalee Mason. *Submitted Photo.*



Lilianne Vang, student at Buffalo Community Middle School, who was the grand prize winner in the MineTosL (MN English as a Second Language Teachers' Association) poster contest -"Enriched by Diversity, Connected by English."

Making a Difference!



## School Board Calendar

**Board Meeting**  
Monday, December 8, 7 p.m.  
Phoenix Learning Center

NOTE: The "Proud Of" for girls golf is a reprint because the wrong photo was used in the November Insider.



## Concert Coming to Town

Celebrate the holidays early by giving the gift of concert tickets! Kenny Loggins, the Sounds of Blackness, Bobby McFerrin,

Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose Community Education is proud to announce that Robert Robinson will bring his 2008 Holiday Tour to the Buffalo Performing Arts Center on Tuesday, December 23 at 7:30 p.m.



Robert Robinson

If you have never heard of Robert Robinson, you will. Prince chose Robinson to open his birthday bash, and he has performed with Aretha Franklin, nine-time Grammy Award winner Andrae Crouch,

Barry Manilow, Jermaine Jackson, and others. Some of you may recognize the two-time Minnesota Music Award Winner from his performances as a featured soloist with Lori Line.

Tickets are \$25 (adults); \$20 (pre-K-grade 12 students or seniors age 62+), and \$15 for groups of 20 or more. To purchase tickets, go to [www.buffalocommunityed.com](http://www.buffalocommunityed.com) or call 763-682-8770. All tickets are reserved seating.

### School Board

Patti Pokorney .....Chairperson  
 Dave Wilson .....Vice Chairperson  
 Sue Lee.....Clerk  
 Jeff Mattson .....Acting Clerk/  
 Treasurer  
 Melissa Brings .....Director  
 Rolf Mohwinkel .....Director  
 Doug Olson .....Director  
 Keenen Stangl .....Student Representative  
 Jim Bauck.....Superintendent

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*Reader comments or questions welcome!*

Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose Schools  
 Independent School District 877

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